



Benchmarks

Volume 1 - Number 4 * July 1998

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Feature Articles

[Campus Computing News](#)

Dr. Maurice Leatherbury, Senior Director of Academic Computing Services, continues to provide updates on campus computing. A new classroom UNIX system is discussed as well as changes in DNS services. The Year 2000 problem also features prominently in this month's news.

[Cross Platform Virus Detection Comes to UNT](#)

We're getting new anti-virus software! It will work on Windows and Macintosh computers and should be more reliable than our previous software -- read all about it . . .

[ISEC at UNT](#)

All UNT and HSC faculty and staff should read this article about Administrative Mainframe Application security.

[Microsoft Office 97 Training Opportunities](#)

Until you know a little about a software package, it is really difficult to feel comfortable using it. UNT and CBT-Systems can ease the transition to the latest Microsoft software to arrive on campus.

[Open Transport: An Alternative to FreePPP for MacOS Users](#)

Confused by ConfigPPP? FreePPP frustrating you? If you're a Macintosh user, and have ever tried to get your Mac connected to the Internet over a modem, you know that there are plenty of hoops to jump through. We've got a solution for you, though, which we think you'll really like.

[The SPSS GLM Procedure, or What Happened to ANOVA?](#)

Did you ever wonder what happened to the ANOVA models procedure in later versions of SPSS? How about the difference between ANOVA and regression? Your questions are answered here.

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Network Connection

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing

What's all this Fuss....

If [Emily Litella](#) were around today she'd probably say something like this: "What's all this fuss I hear about Internet browsers. Why, I love dogs and I see no reason that we shouldn't have pictures of dogs on the Internet. Some of my favorite Web sites feature all breeds of dogs and you can find out a lot of good information about dogs on the Internet. So when I hear the Justice department and Microsoft arguing about Internet browsers, I just think it's a ridiculous waste of time - what? Oh, it's about Internet browsers? ...Nevermind." [\[1\]](#)

Why should we be concerned about Internet browsers. After all, as long as you can still use your favorite one, why should there be a fuss? So Microsoft is going to ship Windows 98 with an Internet Explorer icon on the desktop. What will it matter in the long run?

Bring on the Competition

There's an interesting phenomenon in the computing industry that is frustrating to people in the short term, but beneficial to all in the long run. Any time you have two high-profile competing products, the advances in the technology of those products occur at a rapid pace. A good example is the past competition between WordStar and WordPerfect, and later between WordPerfect and Microsoft Word. People got tired of having to upgrade their word processor every six months or so just to keep up, but we have much better word processors today because that competition happened. Competition spurs advancements. Monopolies stifle advancement.

In the 1950s, IBM, which was previously content to sell card sorters, typewriters, and adding machines decided to use its sales force (one of the biggest around) to become a dominant player in the computer industry (what little of it existed at that time). What better way to sell computers than to sell ones that could read those same [punched cards](#) that had been around since the end of [eighteenth century](#). IBM used its dominance in the business machines market to develop a virtual monopoly on business computers (and faced a number of its own antitrust suits along the way). During the Seventies and Eighties, some companies made hardware that worked like IBM computers, but IBM had firm control of the large-scale software operating system market. The result was a technology rooted in archaic and artificial limits (like an 80-character, i.e. [punch card image](#), line size limit) which supported backward compatibility as one of its shining virtues.

In some ways, backward compatibility is a marvelous thing. If old programs keep working, you don't have to rewrite them; you don't have to modernize them. While the blanket of blame for the [Year 2000](#) problem can't be laid exclusively at IBM's feet, you have to wonder if businesses and other organizations would be doing so much fixing of old COBOL code if those 1960s vintage programs had been long abandoned in favor of newer and smarter technologies. [\[2\]](#)

Browsing for Dollars

So, is competition good for technology? You bet! Is all this fuss about Microsoft and Internet

Explorer all overblown? Not necessarily. IBM did not achieve their dominance in the business computing market over night. It came in gradual gains that cemented it firmly into place by 1980. Microsoft is gradually using its dominance in PC operating systems to get people to use Microsoft's browser, especially all those people who are buying their first computer mostly to use the Internet. It is no coincidence that as part of the deal in which Apple licensed its Quicktime digital video technology to Microsoft for a mere [150 million dollars](#), Microsoft got Apple to adopt Internet Explorer as its supported browser that now ships with all new Apple computers.

What's all the fuss about browsers? Well he (literally) who controls your browser controls your view of the Internet. Half or more of the World Wide Web consists of the Web servers on the Internet, but if you have a browser that can't utilize the technology being served by those sites, they might as well not be there. What's worse, is that your browser, through its built-in features can influence you towards certain Web sites at the exclusion of competing and possibly better alternatives. Without competition, one company determines how the Internet will look to you.

The Internet is built on collaborative standards, with multiple companies producing products that interoperate. With a variety of approaches come a variety of new advances and the best of these get adopted as new standards. As the IBM example shows, monopoly stifles true innovation. Lack of competition can lead to stagnation. Yes, Microsoft will tell you that they are looking out for their customers and integrating new technology features into their operating system, but Microsoft doesn't exist to create new technology (they buy more than they develop - even DOS wasn't Bill Gate's original idea). Microsoft exists to make money (just read about [Bill Gates' house](#).) The best way to make money is to preserve and increase market share. The best way to increase market share is to eliminate competition.

The Once and Future Internet

So the fuss is really about what the Internet will look like in 20 years. Will it be a thriving and egalitarian international communications and commerce media, as accessible in libraries as it is in executive offices? Or will it be "television," A.K.A. a "wasteland" of commercial and meaningless information driving a consumption-based economy and culture, filling the coffers of a few very rich companies and people? All this fuss about browsers might just be the deciding factor. n

[1] For the juveniles (that's anyone under 30 to me these days) or pop-culturally-challenged among us who do not recognize the name "[Emily Litella](#)", it was a character portrayed on the original Saturday Night Live TV show by the late [Gilda Radner](#), who would appear every so often with some unique commentary during the SNL News segment.

[2] By the way, it took a 5-10 year infusion of PCs in to the workplace, i.e. the "downsizing" fad, to finally break IBM's monopolistic position in the computing marketplace. A bunch of reorganizing and billions (yes with a "b") of dollars of loss later (including [\\$800 Million](#) in one year), IBM has reshaped itself into a company that competes in the computing market and is incorporating the latest technologies into its hardware and software product lines.

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Each month we highlight one Internet, USENET Special Interest Group (SIG), or similar mailing list.

EDUCAUSE Online

EDUCAUSE Online is a weekly E-Mail publication of EDUCAUSE.
EDUCAUSE was officially born on July 1, 1998 when the consolidation of CAUSE and Educom became effective.

According to an EDUCAUSE press release, EDUCAUSE Online will be sent each Monday and will summarize news and information found that week on the EDUCAUSE Web site. It is described as "the perfect way to stay on top of matters related to information technology and its impact on higher education, to learn about policies that affect institutions, and to glimpse at what other institutions are doing with technology."

Anyone can subscribe to EDUCAUSE Online by sending an E-mail message to: LISTSERV@LISTSERV.EDUCAUSE.EDU

Leave the subject area blank and in the body of the message write:

SUBSCRIBE EDUCAUSE-ONLINE

Visit the EDUCAUSE Web site is at <http://www.educause.edu/>

For more information contact: info@educause.edu n

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WWW@UNT.EDU

By [Mark Wilcox](#), Campus Web Administrator

What have we been up to lately?

I thought I would use this column for this month to showcase some milestones we have hit in the past year. The list is not in any particular order.

- Crossed the 3.5 million hits per month threshold on the central www.unt.edu server.
- Crossed the 5 million hits per month total threshold for all of our centrally supported Web servers.
- Launched the Web based Internet Account Management system. This system provides a Web-based interface to traditional UNIX command line tools that makes it easier for users to manage their accounts.
- Installed Netscape's Certificate server to manage Secure Socket Layer certificates. We now have 2 servers (people.unt.edu & www.admin.unt.edu) that are using the certificates to provide secure access to their unique services. 2 – 3 more secure servers are being installed within the next few months.
- Installed Cold-Fusion for Web based database access. We will be launching the first 3 applications that use this system, we hope, by the fall.
- Installed Allaire Forums to replace our aging Web Conferencing System.
- Acquired WebCT, a Web Course management system. This system will be used to deliver Web based classes. We delivered our first class to students in Connecticut this summer.
- Installed our Web-based Calendar of Events. The calendar is now in popular use and nearly everyday is now filled with a list of events going on campus. If you haven't seen the calendar, check it out <http://www.unt.edu/calendar/>
- Taught a series of classes to faculty this spring on creating Web based classes.
- Installed Netscape's Directory server to provide a central userid/password database for restricted Web sites.
- Provided the library with a university-wide database through the Directory server to enable us to launch the remote access CD-ROM's.
- Crossed the 30,000 total pages mark.
- Upgraded our FrontPage server extensions from FP97 to FP98.
- Migrated the TAMS, School of Visual Arts and the Economics department Web servers to our central machine.

--That's all that I can think of right now.

Here's what's in store for the next 6 months:

- A major server upgrade. We will be replacing our single SUN Netra box with 2 Sun E-450's that will be clones of each other. This should improve reliability (if one goes down, the other is still there) and performance.
- Working with the [Center for Distributed Learning](#) to launch a full schedule of on-line classes.
- Working with [PAIS](#) on an update to the UNT homepage(s).

If you have any ideas or questions let us know. Just send mail to www@unt.edu

Until next time.

Mark

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Short Courses

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks Editor*

There are still some ACS short courses available this summer. SAS, Simeon, and Web page creation using FrontPage and Netscape courses are still available. Additionally, we will be offering a series of courses aimed at people new to UNT -- especially incoming freshmen. "Introduction to Computing Services at UNT," as the courses are called, will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis August 25-September 4. Follow [this link](#) if you would like to find out more about ACS short courses and/or register for some.

The Computer Advantage courses, offered through the Human Resources Department, are back! Because these courses are offered in the Eagle Student Services Center (ESSC) Lab, UNT *students* can also attend the classes. Follow [this link](#) to check on the availability of these courses, which include:

- Computers - Back to the Basics
- Introduction to Windows 95
- Introduction to Microsoft Word 97
- Advanced Microsoft Word 97 - MailMerge It Together
- Introduction to Microsoft Excel 97 Spreadsheet
- Introduction to Microsoft PowerPoint 97 Slide Shows .

Customized Short Courses

Faculty members can request customized short courses, geared to their class needs. Other groups can request special courses also. Contact ACS for more information (ISB 119, 565-4068, lynch@unt.edu).

Especially for Faculty and Staff Members

As mentioned above, staff and faculty members can also take courses through the [Human Resources](#) Department. A [Distributed Learning Curriculum](#) is also offered especially to faculty members throughout the year. Topics include Windows 95, PowerPoint, Basic Video Conferencing, Multimedia, and a series of classes concerning the World Wide Web.

Alternate Forms of Training

The [Training](#) Web site has all sorts of information about alternate forms of training. Training tapes, Computer Based Training (CBT) and Web-based training are some of the alternatives offered.

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IRC News



Minutes provided by Sue Ellen Richey,
Recording Secretary

IRC Regular Voting Members: Ginny Anderson, Fiscal Affairs; Walter Bowen, Academic Administration; Bill Buntain, Communications Program Group; Carolyn Cunningham, Student Affairs; Paul Dworak, College of Music; Steve Grant, UNT Health Science Center; Don Grose, Libraries; Jenny Jopling, Instruction Program Group; Joneel Harris, Administrative Program Group; Mike Kozak, Faculty Senate; Allen Livingston, Student Association; Steve Miller, Human Resources; Dennis Mueller, Research Program Group; Ramu Muthiah, School of Community Services; Robert Nimocks, Director, Information Technology, UNTHSC; Patrick Pluscht, Distributed Learning Team; Jim Poirot, College of Education; Don Schol, School of Visual Arts; Kathleen Swigger, College of Arts and Sciences; Neal Tate, University Planning Council; Philip Turner, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for Distance Education and Dean of the School of Library and Information Resources (Chair, IRC); Virginia Wheless, Chancellor; John Windsor, College of Business. **IRC Ex-officio Nonvoting Members:** Jim Curry, Microcomputer Maintenance Shop; Richard Harris, Computing Center; Coy Hoggard, Computing Center; Maurice Leatherbury, Computing Center; Sue Ellen Richey, Computing Center (Recording Secretary); Rondel Stevens, Telecommunications.

No new IRC minutes were available at publication time. To see past IRC minutes, consult our [back issues](#).n

IRC Meeting Schedule

The [IRC](#) generally meets on the third Tuesday of each month, from 2-4 p.m., in the Administration Building Board Room. All meetings of the IRC, its program groups, and other committees, are open to all faculty, staff, and students.n

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Transitions

- **Marc St.-Gil**, UNIX Systems Manager and Academic Computing Services employee for the past eight years has resigned to take a position in Las Colinas.

Awards

- **Coy Hoggard**, Senior Director for Administrative Systems, was presented with an award for 30 years of service in June, 1998.
- **Sue Ellen Richey**, Administrative Services, was presented with an award for 15 years of service in June, 1998.
- **Paul Koldjeski**, Database & Central Programming Support, was presented with an award for 10 years of service in June, 1998
- **Douglas Alders**, Computer Operations, was presented with an award for 5 years of service in June, 1998.n

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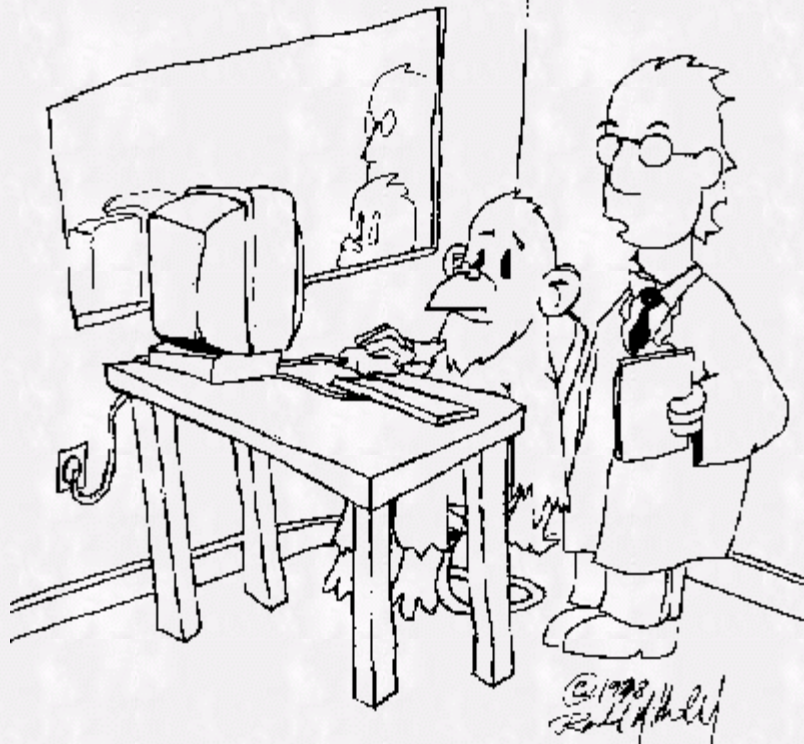
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By [Randal Milholland](#), Documentation Assistant

Proof of man's evolution from primates becomes a step closer as thirty apes of varying intelligence are led to a computer and each immediately start up a game of solitaire.



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- **Subscribe to the *Benchmarks Online* Mailing List** -- If you would like to know when the latest issue is available and get a preview of it's contents, you can subscribe to the **Benchmarks Online** mailing list, unt-benchmarks. To subscribe to this list just send mail to listserv@unt.edu and in the body of the message put the command:

SUBscribe unt-benchmarks *your name*

For example: SUBscribe unt-benchmarks Jane Doe

To **Unsubscribe**:

1. Send the e-mail to listserv@unt.edu
2. In the body of the message type:

Signoff unt-benchmarks

3. Send.

- **Search *Benchmarks Online*** -- If you are looking for a specific topic you might want to search through the issues. Use the form below to search for documents containing specific words or combinations of words. The text search engine will display a weighted list of matching documents, with better matches shown first. Each list item is a link to a matching document; if the document has a title it will be shown, otherwise only the document's file name is displayed. For more information, see this brief [explanation](#) of the query language, along with examples.

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